

Rhodora

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BOTANIZING IN CENTRAL CONNECTICUT.

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EIGHTEEN years ago, when we first visited Pine Swamp, a grove of noble trees (*Pinus Strobus*) gave meaning to the name. These trees were cut half a dozen years or more ago, and though their absence changes the character of this region somewhat, still it is a place rich in possibilities for the botanist.

This particular Pine Swamp (we understand several other places in the state bear that name), is located in the towns of Cromwell and Rocky Hill, Connecticut, about a mile west of the Connecticut River. Its centre is a long, narrow, low-lying strip of sphagnum marsh, so level that the cold sluggish brook that drains it makes many long curves and loops. Here and there, in the more treacherous part of the bog, are a number of sunken places filled with dark, still water, each pool only a few feet in diameter and so regular in outline as to suggest it may have been cut out for some purpose of man. Stained black by the roots decaying moss and leaves, the water gives one the impression of mystery and infinite depth. Here the shrubs and young growth are so thick overhead, the weeds and ferns so rank beneath and the brook so twisting in its course, that one may wander for hours over the same few rods of ground, unless provided with a compass. Here in the heart of the swamp we find

Habenaria blephariglottis (Willd.) Torr., one of the most beautiful of its genus. A few of these plants have held this station for many years. Our first specimen was taken in 1894, and this past summer Mr. C. H. Bissell found a single plant.

Habenaria fimbriata (Ait.) R. Br. occurs frequently along the brook-side.

Corallorrhiza trifida Chatelain was growing in quite a colony under hemlocks.

Microstylis unifolia (Michx.) BSP., only two specimens found.

Smilacina trifolia (L.) Desf. There are rather large areas of this surrounding the little pools. It is one of the swamp plants that seems to have increased since we first collected it here.

Clintonia borealis (Ait.) Raf. flourishes here.

Calla palustris L. covers one section of the brook.

Arisaema triphyllum (L.) Schott. In a very shady wet place, quite a colony of plants showed peculiarities that suggested its close relation to *A. Dracontium*. Each plant was quite strict in growth, the spathe slender and more erect at the summit than is usual in the type. The leaves were five-parted.

Solidago Elliottii T. & G. Two or three plants were growing in a rather open wet place.

Utricularia clandestina Nutt. completely filled one of the little pools to the exclusion of all other growths. Not a trace of the plant could be found in any of the near-by pools.

Nemopanthus mucronata (L.) Trel., lover of cold shady swamps, finds a congenial home here, and adds to the overhead tangle.

Sarracenia purpurea L. has been reported from this region, but we have not found it.

Carex subulata Michx. we suppose may, from the botanist's standpoint, be called the chief treasure of the swamp. It seems to be quite abundant here and we might wonder why it should be so rare when its facility in fastening its mature seeds on the clothing can be so well demonstrated by lightly brushing past a clump of it.

Stellaria borealis Bigel. grows in masses in and near the brook.

So much for the deepest part of the swamp. As we push through the bewildering tangle and come to the foot of the knoll, once inhabited by the pines, we find a profusion of

Lygodium palmatum (Bernh.) Sw. twining over the weeds and bushes and even clothing some of the old stumps with its delicate beauty. This fern has increased very much in the past years.

Aspidium simulatum Davenp. has been collected here by Messrs. Bigelow and Bissell, and is reported as quite abundant in some parts of the bog.

Linnaea borealis L. var. *americana* (Forbes) Rehder formed a thick mat over the roots of one of the old pine stumps. This was our great-

est find during the past season, as it is very rare in this state and we had seen it growing only once before — in Maine.

Rhododendron canadense (L.) BSP. has also increased amazingly since the destruction of the pines and now forms little thickets on the higher land bordering the marsh. Its being so much in evidence suggests a new name for this region — Rhodora Swamp!

As we emerge into the pasture lands we find a few small bogs, and on the edge of one of these

Lycopodium inundatum L. grows in rather a stunted fashion in one small colony.

On our way to North Cromwell Station, the swamp left well behind, we pass two or three small ponds and extract from them *Marsilea quadrifolia* L. possibly introduced from Bantam Lake, at one time its only known habitat in America.

Ceratophyllum and *Elodea* nearly choked one pond with their tangle, the former with its finely dissected leaves, and the latter dotting the surface of the water with its tiny blossoms not much larger than pin-heads.

In a neighboring pasture one of the party discovered many fine specimens of that elusive but not rare little fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum* L.

Referring to the Catalogue of the Flowering Plants and Ferns of Connecticut, we find of the species mentioned in these notes, one (*Carex subulata*) has not been recorded; thirteen are set down as "rare," and several others as "occasional" or "local." Considering that most of the choicest specimens were found in a spot of but a comparatively few rods in radius, it seems as if Pine Swamp — or as we would like to call it, *Rhodora Swamp* — in Central Connecticut were worthy of more than a passing notice.

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.